



## Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact [support@jstor.org](mailto:support@jstor.org).

# THE MUSICAL TIMES

AND

## Singing Class Circular.

Published on the 1st of every Month.

No. 7.

DECEMBER 1, 1844.

Price 1½d.

THE MUSICAL TIMES is to be obtained by order of any Music Seller, Bookseller, or News-vendor; or Subscribers can have it sent regularly by Post on the day of publication, by sending their address written in full, and enclosing a post office order or penny stamps. Annual Subscription, postage free, 2s. 6d. Parties to whom the "Musical Times" is occasionally sent without order, will receive them gratis.

Subscribers receiving coloured envelopes will remember that their subscriptions are again due.

### TO CORRESPONDENTS.

C.S. will see that his suggestion has been adopted, by the use of a larger type for the words of the music.

W. K. will find four Rounds in the present number of the "Musical Times." The arrangement has been to have sacred words to all the music in EVEN numbers of the Times, and secular words to that in the ODD numbers.

### MUSIC CONTAINED IN THE PREVIOUS NUMBERS OF THE "MUSICAL TIMES."

- No. 1. In these delightful pleasant groves.....Parcell  
2. Hear my prayer, O Lord.....Winter  
3. Soon as I careless stray'd ..... Festa  
Hail! all hail! thou merry month of May .Weber  
4. Thou art gone to the grave.....Beethoven  
Hear what God the Lord ..... V. Novello  
5. Hail! smiling morn.....Spofforth  
6. Let all men praise the Lord ..... Mendelssohn  
Forgive, blest shade.....Dr. Calcott

All communications of the progress of Singing Class Teaching, addressed to the Editor of the Musical Times, 69, Dean Street, Soho, will be interesting.

### OUR MUSICAL WANTS.

THERE is no doubt that the deficiencies we note in our public performers are due to many causes, and, amongst these, not the least is the general state of musical taste. Of this, therefore, something will be said hereafter more at length. At present let us offer a few words concerning some sources of national inferiority that do not appear to fall directly on the public, and over which our performers ought, because they might, exercise a salutary control.

It may seem somewhat hard, to exact demonstrations of pleasure from those who con-

ceive they have no cause to entertain any. Performers however must reflect that their hearers can only be moved agreeably to their perception of emotions in those who address them. "Si vis me flere, dolendum est primum ipsi tibi," and so of all other affections. Now if it appear that a performer is himself not delighted with what he is doing, how can he expect his audience to be? I therefore conceive it to be one of the chief secrets of performance—to be delighted and interested in the music itself, and in the execution of it. "But how can that be?" rejoins a peevish opera singer, who has not fingered salary for a fortnight, "how can that be, when we have to struggle with difficulties and discouragement of every kind—ill-paid, ill-puffed, ill-beneficed? In such unpleasant circumstances, how can *we* be pleasant? With fortune frowning at us, how should we smile at you? How should we touch the feelings who touch no salary?" "Or we?" adds a poor clarinet player, "since—compelled to plod on in the thick obscure of the orchestra—neither fortune nor distinction awaits us? How can *we* be expected to touch anything but our stops?" "Or we?" exclaims a querulous alto from behind the scenes, "we—with a shilling a night and no beer—what can we be fairly taxed in?"

Ladies and gentlemen, I beg your pardon, but, though I acknowledge the injustice done your talents, and regret the severe hardships of which you complain, suffer me to dubitate as to your fitness to represent the cause of national music. They who have no love for music, for music's sake, can never have any for the sake of pay. You'll never sing in tune while you live, good master chorus, if you sing flat at a shilling. And you, gentle but obscure man of reeds—you to whom your very obscurity should be an item in the sum of your enjoyments, making you to warble like so many linnets in a bush, sweet as snug—if the tender plaint of your classic pipe can put no spirit of love into you, believe me, you may crack your cheeks on a benefit night, and get no nearer to true expression.

If we consider how many persons follow the profession of music from motives quite foreign to natural love or even common partiality, we

shall readily account for the hard apathetic manner of the majority. It is a cruelty of which nature is sometimes guilty, to bestow a splendid voice on some individual, and no soul to use it; as sometimes we hear of a great landed property falling to the inheritance of an idiot. When this happens in a commercial country like England, there is always sure to be some one near the individual to recognize the *property*, to value it, to urge the proprietor to turn it to usury. The voice is then put in training, to be sure—much in the same spirit as a farmer breaks colts, or manures a turnip field. Masters are got; Italy receives a visit; roulades are laid on by the best finishers; bottled porter is imbibed together with lessons in the true *portamento*; at last the *property* is brought to the highest market value, and Hanover Square opens to receive the prodigy. The result is well-known—A close shake, G from the chest, a screech in alto, “The soldier tired” (and every body else), kid gloves, and loud applause. The speculation has then answered, and another star is added to the galaxy of English vocal talent.

I have said that we “want nothing of Italy but her voice.” I should however have signified that I meant to include in that term the *spirit*, informing the voice. Italy is supposed to produce the greatest number of fine vocal organs, and there seems little doubt of the truth of this opinion; but rich as she is in the *matériel*, she is richer still in the *spirit*. For the spirit of fine singing is the love of singing, and nothing distinguishes an Italian vocalist from an English one more than the obvious enjoyment which the former derives from what he is about. Fine voices are in this country much more rarely met with;—that they are not entirely denied to us, the names of Billington, Harrison, Braham, Salmon, Paton, Clara Novello, sufficiently attest. But for the spirit of fine singing—the *love*—it is a thing almost unknown to the English soil. Patriotism on this head, I feel, is too laborious a business for a single man to undertake. One is sensible of the necessity of giving up the case at once. One foresees the impossibility of making any effective stand against the enemy. Even if the above list of great names could be extended to five times the number, we could not hold out against the forces that Italy would bring. We count our triumphs of this sort by units, and they theirs by hundreds. Such phenomena as Paganini and Malibran, it may be said, can never appear in this country under the existing temper of the times; much more credit must first be given to the affairs of the imagination, and much less to those of low reality; the air of the stage must be made sweet in the nostrils of aristocracy. There may be more truth, indeed, in this than it is agreeable to acknowledge. Nevertheless one half of the responsibility of

failure rests with the performers themselves. That spirit of enthusiasm which is at the bottom of all excellence, which can overcome every natural imperfection, and triumph over every adverse circumstance, which is as absolute over the material of art as over the spirit, which has often raised to imperishable glory an inferior voice, that spirit of enthusiasm is not—as many suppose—only an offspring of temperament and constitution; it is in some measure an affair of the mind, of reason and opinion. The English have no lack of enthusiasm in the abstract, but they have a marked want of enthusiasm in action. They can be energetic enough on paper, and in private; they can make zealous scholars, and inspired poets; they can even drive enthusiasm to the verge of extravagance—so it be all in private and out of sight. But they dare not *display* feeling, they shrink from the avowal of sensibility, they will not “compromise” themselves by the disclosure of such a weakness. I should not be justified in expatiating here, on this remarkable point of national character—it is sufficient to have made this allusion to it. We see here the principle of that defective ardour in action, which, more than physical mediocrity, more than popular apathy, I conceive to be the cause of the general inferiority of English musical performances. I have no doubt that if public feeling were to meet the exertion of performers half-way, if audiences were of a taste to demand finely-passioned performances, if they were refined enough in their own musical perceptions to know true passion when it was exhibited, and to distinguish the energies of genius from the rant of strenuous impudence—which is more than can be said now—then that fire and spirit, at present slumbering in the ranks of the performers, would come forth genially, and with reciprocal warmth. I think so, because I see that in the dramatical world we have long stood preeminent; that dramatical performances, appealing to the understanding and the passions through channels which lie open to all, and imposing no new and extraordinary tax on the spirits and imagination, as music does, have received the highest illustration from genius, because they have been fortunate in enjoying the highest popular appreciation. Hence it is evident, that the national characteristic of reserve and suppression of feeling can be departed from, and that nobly, when there exists the strong stimulus of a public appreciation ready to justify and to crown the attempt.

Now, although the public taste and understanding of musical performances is so far behind that which exists for dramatical representations, as very much to damp the ardour of aspirants in the former sort, yet we may be pretty sure that the development of genuine musical enthusiasm on the part of an English performer would

quickly rouse a kindred fire in English audiences. There is no surer instrument of conversion than one's own faith. The opinion of sincerity in a speaker, is more strong to convince than all his considered arguments; and I think if a performer, singing or playing in such a manner as to evince a deep reliance on the truth of his own feelings—a genuine and hearty faith in the sufficiency of musical expression—should appeal to an audience little skilled in the art, and perchance not over credulous, he would be found to achieve that most gratifying of triumphs—the triumph of sincerity. “Almost thou persuadest me to be a *musician*,” would be the involuntary exclamation extorted from his English auditor. I am not disposed to make very much account of the applause bestowed on various celebrated foreign performers of this high order of genius, such as those before named; I feel doubtful how much of the apparent relish of their genius might be traced to a pre-established name, and a traditional admiration. It is unquestionable, however, that the opinion of a certain rapt emotion—of a certain real intensity of feeling—in those performers, was at least one secret of the popular enthusiasm felt for them, and of the exquisite unfeigned delight that their performances communicated. Now this enthusiasm is no doubt a part of temperament, and is less to be expected in the natives of a northern, than in those of a southern, more genial clime. But that it may receive both a check and a spur from very different—in fact from *moral*—causes, is what I strenuously affirm. That, without which there can be no truly beautiful performance of any kind, is—Faith. (Thus may be most conveniently expressed in one word the desired qualities.) By faith, I would signify all those feelings of reliance on the excellence and sufficiency of any art, which removes from the act of performance every vestige of indecision and “compunctious visitings.” If while I am executing a concerto, my feelings are dashed with the slightest conceivable doubt of the full value of music, if I admit to my mind for a single moment the suspicion that *money* may be better, that *rank* may be better, that the wealthy listener on my right, or the titled no-listener on my left, or any other individual in that company in fact (unless it be some one, perhaps, eminent for virtue and goodness—which is another sort of music) is greater or happier or more to be envied than I, then my full soul has not entered into that concerto, nor can I be the devout musician able to perform it. It is like some heaven-offending glance given in a church, nullifying the muttered prayer with its mixture of “mortal mould.”

A beautiful performer of music, then, must be one thoroughly in love with music, and thoroughly convinced that nothing is better. Hearty and

fearless himself, he must be full of confidence in others. He must be endowed with faith enough to repose securely on the truth of feeling. Full of passionate aspirations, he must believe in their power of commanding the sympathy of others, of conquering coldness, of fertilizing dulness, of awakening the good genius of all.

*By the late EGERTON WEBBE.*

#### BRIEF CHRONICLE OF THE LAST MONTH.

THE ANTIQUARIAN MUSICAL SOCIETY held its annual meeting on the 1st November, at the rooms of the Royal Society of Musicians, in Lisle-street.

THE SACRED HARMONIC SOCIETY commenced their season on the 6th November, with Handel's “Israel in Egypt.” The performance, as a whole, was satisfactory. The choruses were generally sung with precision, with occasional exceptions, especially “The people shall hear.” The Hall was fully attended. The oratorio was announced for repetition on the 29th of November.

THE SACRED CONCERTS at Crosby Hall are fixed for the 27th November, 18th December, 8th and 29th January, 19th February, and 12th March. These concerts are highly interesting, from the novel and sterling character of the music forming the programmes.

THE SOCIETY OF BRITISH MUSICIANS, with the kind permission of Mr. Erat, have determined to open the library to the members and associates every Monday evening, from 7 till 10 o'clock.

A NEW ORGAN, built by Hill, containing fifty-two stops, was opened at All Saints' Church, Northampton, when several compositions of Haydn, Bach, Rinck, Mendelssohn, Beethoven, Mozart, &c. were played in first-rate style.

THE CHORAL HARMONISTS commenced their thirteenth season on the 18th.

MANCHESTER—The Choral Society has issued a very attractive programme for the next concert. The best part of Handel's “Joshua,” an anthem of Rinck's, “Lord, incline thine ear”—new, we think, to a Manchester audience—and several other attractive pieces, are included.—*Manchester Courier*.

MR. MAINZER.—We learn that a great public meeting was to be held in Edinburgh on the 27th, at which Lord Murray is to preside, and in which Mr. Mainzer will develop a plan for the introduction of singing classes into all schools of Scotland. As the result of this meeting will not be known to us in time for publication, we promise a report of the same in our next.

COVENT GARDEN THEATRE.—Mr. Laurent will open this establishment, after the departure of Jullien, for purposes legitimate. Mr. G. Alexander Macfarren is engaged as music-director, and under his care will be produced the “Antigone” of Mendelssohn. This great work has already been received with enthusiasm forty times at Paris, and at six theatres in Germany.

LIVERPOOL.—The twenty-fifth public performance of the Liverpool Festival Choral Society, given at the Musical Hall, Bold-street, to a numerous auditory, consisted of Handel's oratorio, “Solomon”—the first time of its representation in Liverpool. Its execution added new laurels to those already attained by this society.

PHILHARMONIC SOCIETY.—The dates of the concerts for the ensuing season are fixed for March 31, April 14 and 28, May 12 and 26, June 9 and 23, and July 7. There will be no alteration in the terms of admission.